THE WORLD.

NUMBER CXXVIII.

By *ADAM FITZ-ADAM.*

To be continued every THURSDAY.

THURSDAY, *June* the 12th, 1755.

MONTAIGNE tells us of a gentleman of his country, much troubled with the gout, who being adviſed by his phyſicians to abſtain from ſalt meats, aſked what elſe they would give him to quarrel with in the extremity of his fits; for that he imagined, curſing one minute the Bologna ſauſages, and another the dried tongues he had eaten, was ſome mitigation of his pain.

If

If all men, when they are either out of health, or out of humour, would vent their rage after the manner of this Frenchman, the world would be a much quieter one than we ſee it at preſent. But dried tongues and ſauſages have no feeling of our diſpleaſure; therefore we reſerve it for one another: and he that can wound his neighbour in his fame, or ſow the ſeeds of diſcord in his family, derives happineſs to himſelf.

I once knew a huſband and wife, who without having the leaſt tincture of affection for each other, or any ſingle accompliſhment of mind or perſon, made a ſhift to live comfortably enough, by contributing equally to the abuſe of their acquaintance. The conſideration of another's uneaſineſs, or, what was ſtill better, that it was in their power to inflict it, kept pain, ſickneſs and misfortune from touching them too nearly. They collected ſeparately the ſcandal of the day, and made themſelves company for one another, by conſulting how they might diſperſe it with additions and improvements. I have known the wife to have been cured of a fit of the cholic, by the huſband's telling her that a young lady of her acquaintance was run off with her father's footman; and I once ſaw the huſband ſit with a face of delight to have a tooth drawn, upon my bringing him the news that a very particular friend of his was a bankrupt in the Gazette. Their loſſes at cards were what chiefly tormented them; not ſo much from a principle of avarice, as from the conſideration that what They had loſt, others had won; and upon theſe occaſions, the family peace has been ſometimes diſturbed. But a freſh piece of ſcandal, or a new misfortune befalling any of the neighbourhood, has immediately ſet matters right, and made them the happieſt people in the world.

I

I THINK it is an obſervation of the witty and ingenious author of Tom Jones (I forget his words) that the only unhappy ſituation in marriage is a ſtate of indifference. Where people love one another, ſays he, they have great pleaſure in obliging; and where they hate one another, they have equal pleaſure in tormenting. But where they have neither love nor hatred, and of conſequence, no deſire either to pleaſe or plague, there can be no ſuch thing as happineſs. That this obſervation may be true in the general, I very readily allow; yet I have inſtanced a couple, who, though as indifferent to each other as it was poſſible for man and wife to be, have yet contrived to be happy through the misfortunes of their friends.

BUT it is nevertheleſs true of happineſs, that it is principally to be found at home; and therefore it is that in moſt families one viſits, one ſees the huſband and wife (inſtead of contenting themſelves with the miſeries of their neighbours) mutually plaguing one another: and after a ſucceſſion of diſputes, contradictions, mortifications, ſneers, pouts, abuſes, and ſometimes blows, they retreat ſeparately into company, and are the eaſieſt and pleaſanteſt people alive.

THAT this is to be mutually happy, I believe few married couples will deny; eſpecially if they have lived together a fortnight, and of courſe, are grown tired of obliging. But it has been very luckily diſcovered, that as our ſorrows are leſſened by participation, ſo alſo are our joys; and that unleſs the pleaſure of tormenting be confined entirely to one party, the happineſs of either can by no means be perfect.

The

The wife therefore of a meek and tender diſpoſition, who makes it the ſtudy of her life to pleaſe and oblige her huſband, and to whom he is indebted for every advantage he enjoys, is the fitteſt object of his tyranny and averſion. Upon ſuch a wife he may exert himſelf nobly, and have all the pleaſure to himſelf: but I would adviſe him to enjoy it with ſome little caution, becauſe (though the weekly bills take no notice of it) there is really ſuch a diſeaſe as a broken heart; and the misfortune is, that there is no tormenting a dead wife.

HAPPY is the huſband of ſuch a woman: for unleſs a man goes into company with the conſcious pleaſure of having left his wife miſerable at home, his temper may not be proof againſt every accident he may meet with abroad; but having firſt of all diſcharged his ſpleen and ill-humour upon his own family, he goes into company prepared to be pleaſed and happy with every thing that occurs: or if croſſes and diſappointments ſhould unavoidably happen, he has a wife to repair to, on whom he can beſtow with intereſt every vexation he has received. Thus it was honeſtly and wiſely ſaid by the old ſerjeant of ſeventy, who, when his officer aſked him how he came to marry at ſo great an age, anſwered, "Why, and pleaſe your honour, they teaze and put "me out of humour abroad, and ſo I go home and beat "my wife." And indeed happy is it for ſociety that men have commonly ſuch repoſitories for their ill-humours; for I can truly aſſert, that the eaſieſt, the beſt-natured, and the moſt entertaining man I know out of his own houſe, is the moſt tyrannical maſter, brother, huſband and father in the whole world; and

who,

who, if he had no family to make miſerable at home, would be the conſtant diſturber of every party abroad.

But I am far from limiting this particular privilege to the huſband: the wife has it ſometimes in her power to enjoy equal happineſs. For inſtance, when a woman of family and ſpirit condeſcends to marry for a maintenance a wealthy citizen, whoſe delight is in peace, quietneſs and domeſtic endearments; ſuch a woman may continually fill his houſe with routs and hurricanes; ſhe may teaze and fret him with her ſuperiority of birth; ſhe may torment his heart with jealouſy, and waſte his ſubſtance in rioting and gaming. She will have one advantage too over the male tyrant, inaſmuch as ſhe may carry her triumph beyond the grave, by making the children of her huſband's footman the inheritors of his fortune.

Thus, as an advocate for matrimony, I have entered into a particular diſquiſition of it's principal comforts: and as no motives may be wanting to induce men to engage in it, I have endeavoured to ſhew that it is next to an impoſſibility for a couple to miſcarry, ſince hatred as well as love, and indifference as well as either (I mean if people have ſenſe enough to make a right uſe of their friend's misfortunes) is ſufficient for happineſs. Indeed it is hard to gueſs, when one reads in the public papers that a treaty of marriage is on foot between the right honourable lord Somebody, and lady Betty Such-a-one, whether his lordſhip's and the lady's paſſion be love or hatred: and, to ſay truth,